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inside story

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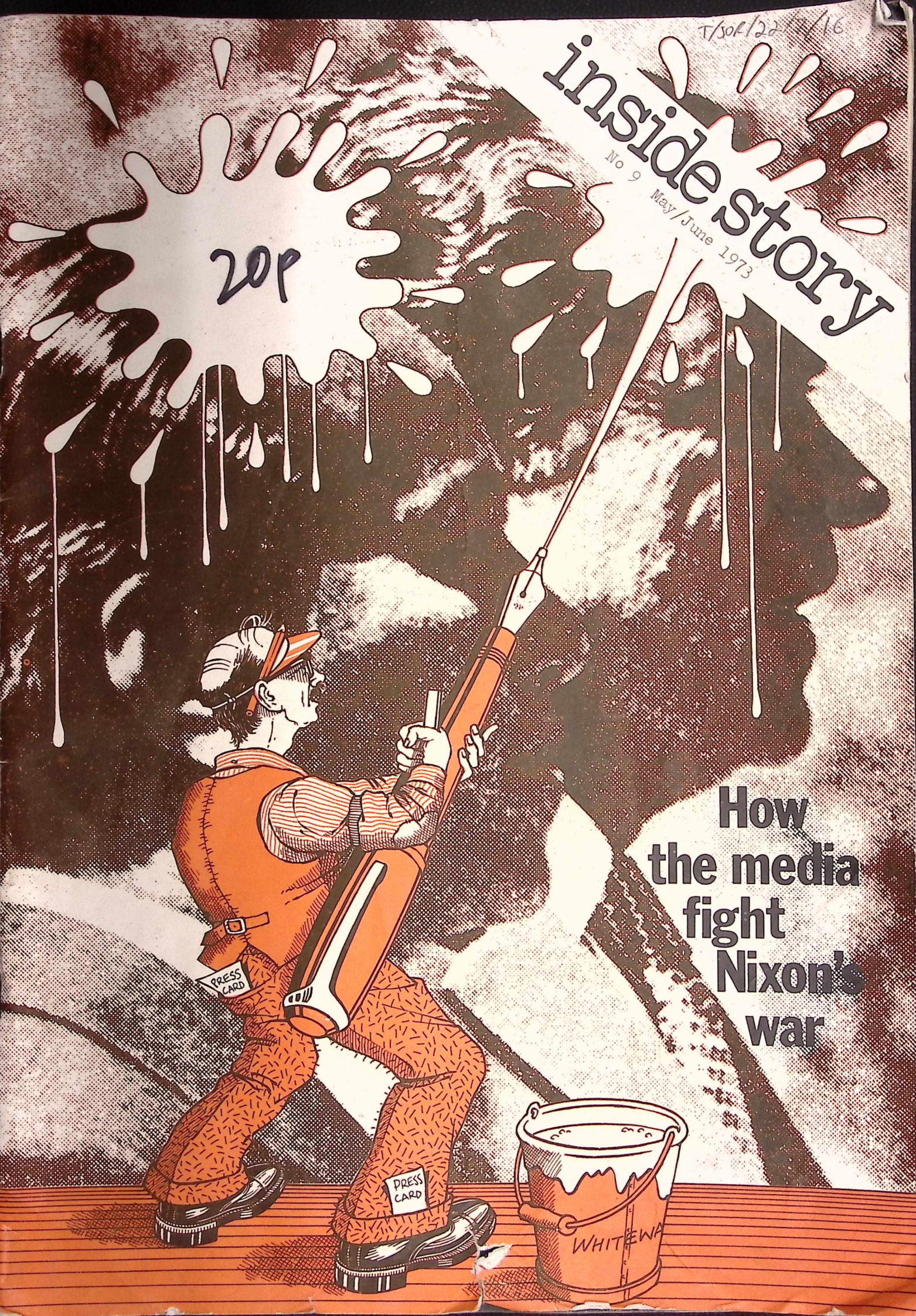
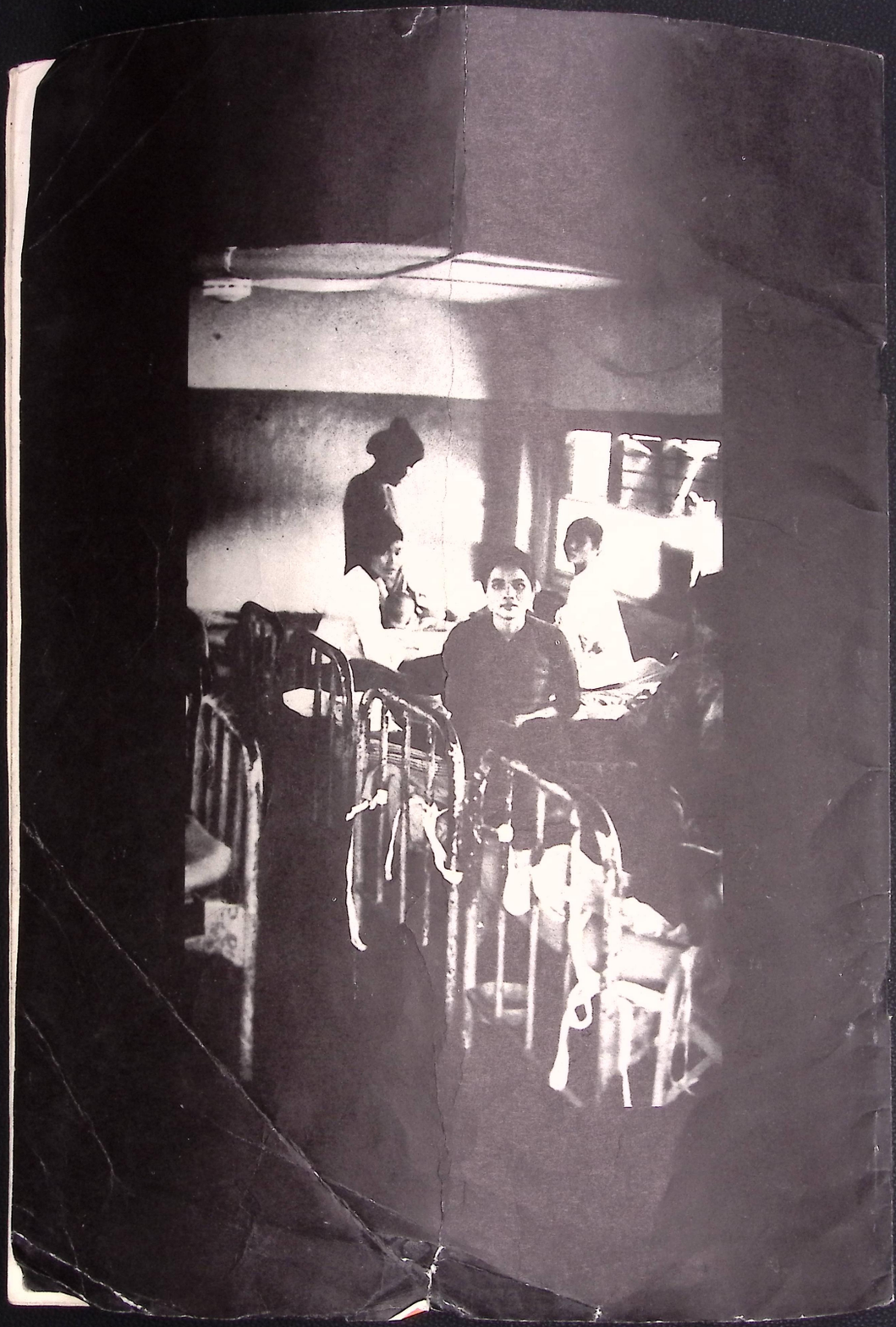


How the media fight Nixon's war



What the papers don't say about Vietnam

The photograph opposite was taken inside the prison hospital at Quang Ngai, South Vietnam, as were those on the next few pages (photos: Barton, Ronin). Our first article describes the conditions of women detainees in Quang Ngai where there are well over 2,000 political prisoners.

It is difficult to give a precise figure for the total number of political prisoners in South Vietnam, but the Third Force Group, composed mainly of Buddhists and Catholics, which operates from Paris, says there could be 300,000.

The British media have highlighted the release of American prisoners from North Vietnam but have seemed less concerned about the South Vietnamese still detained and tortured in the jails of their own country.

As our second article illustrates British newspapers, TV and radio have generally reported the war in Indochina from the American side - in every sense. British coverage has been worse than that of several American newspapers.

Mai (Marge Nelson) when Marge used to visit the prison.

I thought, my God, Marge goes home and testifies before Congress about the torturing she witnessed at the prison some five years ago, but the same woman who was tortured five years ago is still in prison and still being tortured and no one had done a damned thing about it.

I thought, too, about the years this woman has been in jail. Marge has returned to the United States, married, finished a degree in public health, practised medicine, had a baby, and talked and travelled in many countries. This woman hasn't gone anywhere or done anything. She says she has been a political prisoner for six years.

Somehow these women persevere, but I wonder if they can do it indefinitely. A Quang Ngai police official told a reporter friend of mine that the police are beginning a special campaign to pick up more women. They suspect that more women than ever are indirectly or directly working to oppose the Thieu government. I imagine that the torture and suffering we've seen at the prison and the prison ward of the hospital over the last six years is just a glimpse of a new era of struggle for the women of Vietnam.

The ceasefire-according to Fleet Street

This article on how the British press handled the Vietnam ceasefire is part of a forthcoming pamphlet, The Press and Vietnam. This pamphlet has been compiled by the Media Group of the Indochina Solidarity Conference (ISC) and will appear as No 3 in the ISC 'Indochina Information' series. Other titles include Weapons of Imperialism (No 1) and The Truth About Thieu (No 2). Copies of these (Nos 1 & 2, 10p; No3, 20p) can be ordered from ISC, c/o AREAS, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1.

'American optimism unruffled by murmurings from Hanoi' said the Times headline on 28 October, 1972. It was a curious choice of words, but one which was all too typical of the handling of the Vietnam ceasefire by the British press. For it was the American failure to sign the ceasefire, according to the timetable already agreed on, about which Hanoi was 'murmuring'. And the Americans were now being credited with 'optimism' for professing to believe that the ceasefire - which they were refusing to sign in three days' time - might nevertheless 'soon be arranged'.

In the event it took three more months of American stubbornness, which included 10 days of savage bombing of North Vietnam, before their 'optimism' was justified and Hanoi's 'murmurings' were quelled. The compilers of this pamphlet have carefully scanned the major British press cuttings for this period and for the subsequent 60 days till the end of March during which the military provisions of the ceasefire in Vietnam were supposed to be implemented. The verdict must be that the average reader of the British press was likely to be at best confused and (more probably) at worst misled by the coverage of the 'serious' dailies and weeklies.

This does not mean that there are no differences between the vaious newspapers under consideration. The Telegraph, for example, is in a class by itself for unashamed reaction, championing the cause of President Thieu in every other headline, and little account has been taken of it in this section. (A separate section will be devoted to the Telegraph in our complete pamphlet and another one to television and radio.) The Guardian, on balance, had a higher proportion of news stories and features which were critical of the Saigon government and (at least from its correspondent Peter Jenkins) of US policy.

Nor have we analysed editorials, partly because they involve very different problems of communication and analysis, mostly because almost no one reads them anyhow. What we have analysed (in the press cuttings libraries of the Royal Institute for International Affairs and the International Confederation for Disarmament and Peace) is the overall effect of the day-by-day coverage which is provided by what are commonly regarded as fairly 'liberal' and 'serious' newspapers. And it is from the point of view of the general reader, scanning his daily paper without the time or expertise to sort the occasional wheat from the deluge of chaff, that the following three

conclusions can be drawn.

1 The use of American sources and statements vastly outweighed that of sources from the DRV ('Hanoi') and the PRG ('Vietcong'). Information from US sources was more often treated as fact than as assertion. Headlines usually reflected the US view.

2 There was a general failure to ask, even to report, the sort of hard political questions which were being raised by Hanoi and elsewhere about the real nature of US intentions in Vietnam. Was the US resolve to leave Vietnam really genuine? Why did Nixon backtrack on his message of 22 October 1972 to Hanoi and refuse to sign the draft agreement? What was the real significance of the massive inflow of US civilians and equipment to South Vietnem? How did the US fulfil its obligations when the ceasefire came into effect? Even the US press paid more attention to these vital questions than its British counterpart.

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3 There were a few notable exceptions to the media's bland pro-US treatment. Peter Jenkins in the Guardian ('Nixon's rain of terror', 22 December), Anthony Lewis in the Times ('Widening cracks in Dr Kissinger's facade', 20 December) and the occasional Sunday Times feature. But there was no follow through from the insight which these provided: their impact was quickly submerged by the overall bias.

Only the already well informed reader would be likely to spot the really significant story.

To illustrate these conclusions, we have chosen for extended treatment two episodes: (a) the raising of US negotiating demands after Nixon's refusal to sign the draft agreement, and (b) the 'violations' issue after the ceasefire was finally signed.

(a) From the draft agreement to the ceasefire: Washington raises the price

In the late October the press generally accepted the American alibi that it was Thieu's intransigence which held up the signing of the draft agreement: 'Thieu Sticks to His Guns' (Guardian, 20 Oct), 'The man who wants to go on fighting' (Observer, 29 Oct) and, from an openly committed daily, 'Saigon Slow to Swallow Hanoi's Line' (Telegraph, 20 Oct). The British Foreign Office lent a hand by courtesy of the Times Diplomatic Correspondent, who reflected (21 Oct) on Mr Nixon's problems of 'timing', in a story presumably based on his unattributable sources in Whitehall.

It was 'clear', he said, that Thieu would not fall in with the agreement if it was 'carried through with undue haste'. It was 'also argued' that Mr Nixon was anxious lest if he signed the agreement before the presidential election it 'might be repudiated' by Hanoi - a ludicrous argument in view of North Vietnam's insistent demand that the agreement be signed. Only the Foreign Office could have been foolish enough to dream it up on behalf of their allies.

At the same time Washington's cheery insistence that peace was just round the corner - one more negotiating session of 'three or four days' would be enough - was uncritically echoed. The North Vietnamese were made to sound boorish and uncouth for their indecent haste in wanting it right now. In the Guardian (30 Oct) Adam Raphael from Washington indulgently reported: 'The US has lightly but firmly rejected North Vietnam's ultimatum that the peace agreement shall be signed in Paris on Tuesday' (the story carried the whimsical headline 'US optimistic about diplomatic minuet with North Vietnam'). And the Times carried the story of how the agreed date passed without a ceasefire under the headline 'US refuses to rush into ceasefire agreement' (1 Nov).

Yet within a mere day the picture seemed very different, according to Fred Emery from Washington (Times, 2 Nov). Thieu was no longer such a problem - the administration was not 'ruffled' by his objections to the agreement. But its signing was now 'a matter of weeks' not of days, and the US would be asking Hanoi 'to withdraw some of its troops from the South'. The headline neutrally read 'Ceasefire Now Thought to be Weeks Away'. If it had been North Vietnam which was raising its demands, the corresponding headline would surely have been 'Hanoi Sets New Conditions for Ceasefire'.

Why did the US raise new demands,

effectively repudiating the draft agreement and Nixon's message of 22 October to Hanoi? Here was the story which every Washington correspondent should have been urged to cover without delay, but hardly a whisper came through. There were a very few exceptions. 'US said to have held up Vietnam agreement', said the Times on 10 November, briefly summarising a Washington Post analysis of Nixon's 'circuitous strategy'.

Earlier in the Sunday Times (29 Oct) its Washington correspondent (and Kissinger's friend) Henry Brandon had already provided an essential clue by revealing that Kissinger 'could not have expected that Hanoi would suddenly agree to Nr Nixon's own proposals'. Towards the end of November the Sunday Times (26 Nov) gave a good summary of Kissinger's new demands to get round the embarrassing fact that Hanoi had accepted his master's original demands. But the lead to the Observer's story on the same day was more typically unperceptive: 'President Nixon may now be hard pressed to achieve his goal of a ceasefire by Christmas'.

[redacted]

The essential and central fact, that the US had deliberately backtracked on the draft agreement and that this was why the fighting continued in Vietnam, was hardly ever reflected in the day-to-day coverage which, ignoring Hanoi's statements of what had happened, mostly reflected the Washington line.

A new justification now surfaced in Washington: secret 'communist' documents had been discovered which conveniently spelt out their plans for taking over after a ceasefire ('Fears of Ceasefire Exploitation Retard Timetable of Peace', Guardian, 8 Nov; 'Peace Delay Upsets Hanoi's Takeover Aim', Telegraph, 8 Dec). Once again it was somehow the communists who wanted to fight and the Americans - even Thieu - who wanted peace, or so it appeared to the Financial Times ('Hanoi Threatens to Fight On', 9 Nov) and the Times ('Communists Intensify Attacks in Vietnam as Hanoi Radio Condemns Thieu Peace Proposals', 14 Dec).

Hanoi was portrayed as taking a 'harder' or a 'softer' line (Financial Times, 17 Nov) according to the degree to which it seemed likely to accept what was modestly described as Dr Kissinger's 'revised package' (Observer, 26 Nov). And it was the good Doctor who was seen by the Financial Times to 'Labour(s) On with Peace Talks', while it was the North Vietnamese who were seen to raise their demands - as they did but only in response to Kissinger and in much less significant areas of negotiation - and block the peace.

By the time that the Paris talks had been broken off and Nixon had savagely bombed the North during Christmas, the political context in which these events took place had been completely obscured by the British media's failure to follo up the most significant feature of the negotiations (ie the US shift and the questions which it raised about Nixon's aims) and by its general tendency to reflect the substance and tone of Washington's apologetics. Totally inadequate coverage of statements from Hanoi only reinforced the pro-US slant.

The bombing itself was on the whole fairly reported but from a humanitarian view which made it seem savage but incomprehensible, rather than as a military move of Nixon's which simply paralleled and complemented the political strategy pursued by Kissinger since October - the purpose being the same, t raise the price of peace. There was plenty of discussion in the British press about the rumours of a Nixon-Kissinger disagreement or split; there was very little about the joint Nixon-Kissinger strategy which had drive the Vietnamese back into their air-raid shelters.

(b) Violations after the ceasefire: a double standard

While the news of the ceasefire was fresh in the first couple of weeks afte its signing on 27 January 1973, the British press carried a fair number of stories from their own correspondents o Thieu's multifold violations. These included the bombing and shelling of NL held areas, punitive action against suspected NLF supporters, refusal to provide facilities for, and access to, the DRV and PRG delegations to the four party and two-party Commissions etc. On NLF village was shelled just after it had been visited by Western press and T correspondents. Peter Hazelhurst described the incident vividly in the Times (7 February 1973), though the effect of his story was slightly weakened by the editorial comment that it had been filed 'under great tension' - as if to excuse Hazelhurst's undiplomatically black-and-white pictur

of a naked Saigon violation.

Other correspondents regarded these violations as regrettable but understandable. Thieu, it seemed to Martin Woollacott in the Guardian (19 February), was not really to blame after all: '..it seems impossible to ask the South Vietnamese to stop the fighting here (in the Central Highlands), with roads still cut, leaving Pleiku and Kontum largely isolated. This would amount to the effective ceding of the Highlands to the Communist side...

'The chances of a more effective ceasefire before the international conference opens depend, in the two middle regions of the country, on whether the South Vietnamese can winkle the other side out within the next week. Understandably, they are not going to stop on any other basis.'

The ceasefire agreement had recognised that South Vietnam was under the control of two separate parties, Saigon and the PRG. But Woollacott - like many other correspondents in Vietnam - operating out of Saigon, implicitly accepted the Saigon claim that the PRG only controlled a small portion of the countryside.

[redacted]

If therefore the PRG had somehow come into possession of the Central Highlands, Saigon was quite justified in trying to 'winkle' them out - for they had no business to be there. The 'communists' were often reported as having 'seized territory' immediately before the ceasefire - as if they were breaking the rules of the game - even when they had simply hoisted flags in areas where they had local support. In the 60 days after the ceasefire no comprehensible picture of the pattern of control in South Vietnam, based on PRG as well as Saigon claims, was ever offered by British correspondents on the spot.

Official Saigon briefings continued to provide most of the raw meat from which the correspondents - particularly those of the wire services - served up their daily reports. If 'violations' were claimed by both sides, those alleged by Saigon against the PRG almost always came first. The PRG version, tagged on at the end, was likely anyway to be chopped off by a sub-editor. The Hue 'demonstration' of 25 February provides a good example.

'Angry South Vietnam Crowd Manhandles Ceasefire Team', said the Times on the next day, reporting a 'demonstration' in Hue to mark the 'fifth anniversary of mass executions of Hue residents' during the Tet 1968 offensive. (The Hue myth - that thousands of civilians were killed by the NLF in the 1968 Tet offensive - is exposed in another section of this pamphlet.) Several hundreds of demonstrators were said to have 'pushed aside South Vietnamese military police on duty' and broken into compounds housing North Vietnamese ceasefire officials.

[redacted]

Neither the Times nor the Guardian suggested that the demonstrations might have been less than spontaneous, although Hanoi and the PRG had described previous incidents of this sort as engineered by the Saigon regime. Nor did either paper publish the Vietnam News Agency (Hanoi)'s account of this particular incident, which was broadcast at 16.13 GMT on the day it took place, describing it as another provocation by 'a gang of thugs' which had been hired by the Saigon administration. Regardless of what actually happened, the fact is that the British public only heard one side of the story.

Both with regard to this incident and generally, it might be argued in defence of the British press that news from the 'other side' - ie the DRV and PRG - is harder to come by. The transmissions of their news agencies are monitored by Reuters in Hongkong, but only a very small proportion is passed on by the Reuters international service or by other Hongkong correspondents. They are also monitored by the BBC at its Monitoring Unit in Reading, but most newspapers only get the BBC's transcripts a day later. However the Times has exclusive rights to Agence France-Presse, which has its own Hanoi correspondent, but the Times hardly ever uses his stories. The BBC's own news programmes have direct and immediate access to the Monitoring Unit's News Bureau, yet they are as slanted towards Saigon as is the press.

Besides, while the problem of getting news from the DRV and the PRG may seem to be technical, it would have been solved long ago if the media had made a serious political effort to achieve their mythical 'balance' and give the 'other side' as much coverage as the US/Saigon side.

While Saigon claims of NLF 'offensives' were regularly used to fill up gaps on

the foreign news pages, two crucial allegations of US violations were ignored by the entire British press:

1 On 1 March the DRV Foreign Ministry issued a detailed statement complaining of US delays in removing the mines, according to the ceasefire agreement, which it had placed in North Vietnam's territorial waters and inland waterways. The DRV said that the US had not yet cleared a single mine, that it wanted at least 180 days to complete the job, and that it refused outright to clear the inland waterways. While this statement was ignored, the Guardian on 7 March prominently reported a remark by US Secretary of State Rogers that 'I think the harbour (Haiphong) is open'.

Unlike the International Herald Tribune, the Guardian did not carry a flat denial of the same day by a US Department of Defence spokesman, who said that 'The harbour is not open'. The impression left with the British public by this and other stories was that by early March the US had fulfilled its commitment and cleared the mines. No British paper followed up a very full account by Dana Schmidt in the Christian Science Monitor (13 March) which substantially confirmed the DRV's complaints. The CSM story was headlined 'US takes its time on mines removal'.

2 Also on 1 March the PRG military delegation to the four-party Joint Military Commission in Vietnam issued a statement accusing the US of having 'refused to discuss the procedures for troop withdrawal', so that the four-party Commission and the International Control Commission had been unable to monitor the withdrawal of US and other 'allied' forces from the South. This was in violation of a number of clauses of the ceasefire Agreement and Protocols. All that the US did was to announce unilaterally that it had withdrawn 'this or that force' without allowing any verification.

[redacted]

This serious charge was not reported in the British press; nor was the issue which it raised ever the subject of a story from Saigon by one of the resident British correspondents. But when on 30 March at a ceremony marking the departure of the last US military personnel from South Vietnam, DRV and PRG officials were allowed to be present, this story was given full coverage. The British public was left with the impression that all previous stages of the withdrawal had been monitored in the same way.

Meanwhile briefings from the Pentagon alleging that the DRV had violated the ceasefire by sending in tens of thousands of troops to the South (the precise figures varied from story to story) were given full coverage. So were Saigon statements alleging NLF violations on the ground.

One must conclude that over these critical months the 'balance' maintained by the serious dailies was seriously imbalanced. It even compared unfavourably with the coverage maintained by, for example, the New York Times and Washington Post. 'It is not our war', is the excuse sometimes given in reply to complaints that a particular angle on the Vietnam situation has not been covered. All too often in the British press it has been only too much 'our' war - on the American side.

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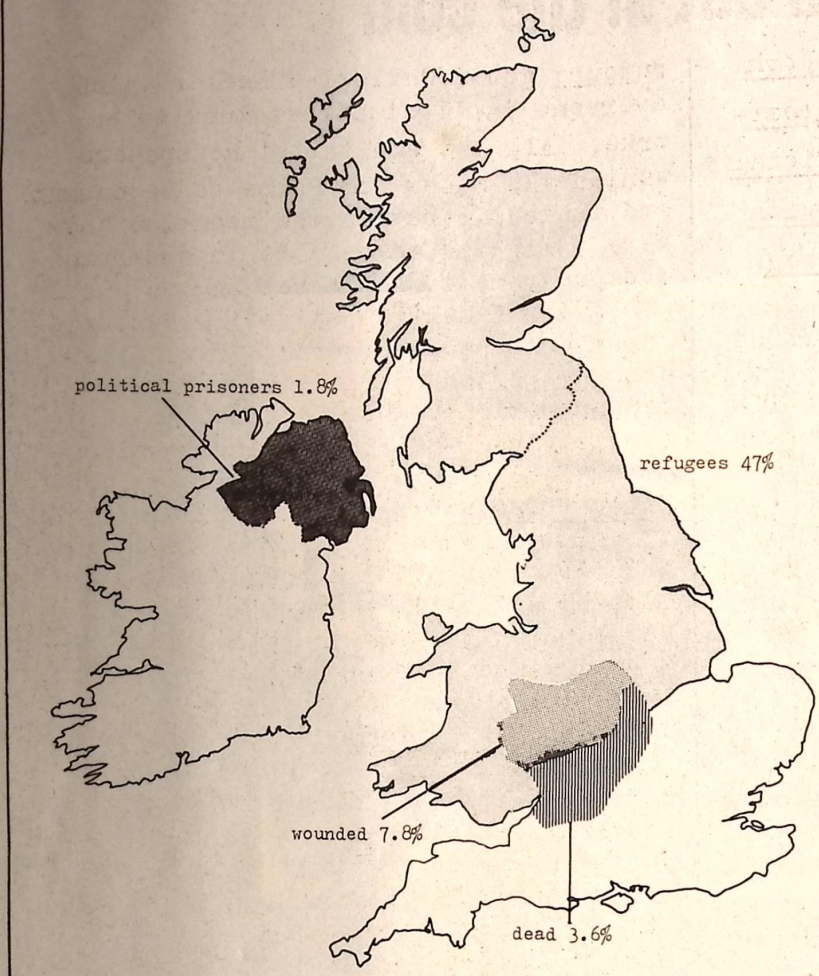


If it had happened here....

1

This map shows something of what the British would have suffered if the Americans had fought us instead of the Vietnamese. The actual figures, according to the Thieu government, are: dead 600,000; wounded 1,326,000 and refugees 8 million out of a population of 17 million. This casualty rate among Britain's population of 55 million would add up to: nearly 2 million dead; over 4 million wounded and about 26 million refugees. And the equivalent figure for South Vietnam's estimated 300,000 political prisoners would be about a million - or the population of Northern Ireland without Belfast.

2

The Solidarity pamphlet showing the Regional Seat of Government system as it was in World War II (marked o) and as it would have been in World War III (marked x).

The spies who stayed out in the cold

In our last issue we described the work of the Spies for Peace up to the appearance of their pamphlet Danger! Official Secret. Now we continue the story with an account of what happened afterwards.

The Spies for Peace had set out to rouse the nuclear disarmament movement and to spread the theory and practice of do-it-yourself mass action against the Warfare State. There is no doubt that this aim was achieved for a time.

The original pamphlet was followed by a literally incalculable number of reprints and summaries produced by various groups at Easter 1963 itself and then during the next few weeks. There were certainly at least a hundred separate editions, most of them duplicated, but some surreptitiously printed. They appeared all over the country, and also in other countries.

One summary which was distributed at the annual conference of the National Union of Students in Keele on 17 April was produced by Martin Loney, then a student leader, now the new General Secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties. A particularly interesting reprint was in the left-wing French paper France Observateur on 18 April, with the comment: 'Treason ceased to be treason when it became a public service. The boldness of the Spies for Peace has promoted the peace march from the level of British folklore into an event of international significance.'

In the same way, the demonstration at Warren Row on 13 April was followed by demonstrations organised by local nuclear disarmament groups at almost every other RSG in the country during the next couple of months; and the whole Committee of 100 movement took on a new lease of life.

All the time the episode was reported much more widely than had ever been hoped. No doubt this was partly because of its intrinsic interest; but it was much more because the press during that period bore a grudge against the government, following the imprisonment of two reporters in February for refusing to disclose (non-existent) sources of information for (imaginary) stories about the Vassall spy case, and the denial by John Profumo in March of rumours about Christine Keeler which everyone in Fleet Street knew to be true. All the capitalist newspapers wanted the Spies for Peace to be caught and punished; but in the meantime they were delighted to be able to embarrass the government from a new angle.

Despite specific police threats, the papers of the libertarian left gave full accounts of the pamphlets and the demonstrations. More interesting, despite the D-Notices against publication of details of the RSG system, the Daily Telegraph broke ranks on 19 April by printing what was alleged to be the transcript of a Radio Prague broadcast quoting extensively from the Spies for Peace pamphlet. On the same day Private Eye published a full-page parody of the pamphlet, and on the next day it was shown on That Was The Week That Was.

The last word came from National Opinion Polls, who carried out an investigation into who Londoners thought was to blame for giving away the secrets to the Spies for Peace: 37 per cent said 'the Government'; 50 per cent said 'no one'. So much for that key factor, public opinion.

But the important thing was how the situation would develop. Soon the ripples began to spread as the lessons sank in. The details about RSG-4, which had been sent to contacts in Cambridge, were published in a similar though much shorter pamphlet on 25 April. On 2 May a typed leaflet appeared stating that the communications system connecting the RSGs and the central government was located in underground bunkers near Chancery Lane underground station in London, with surface entrances in Furnival Street and High Holborn. At the same time secret telephone numbers were being passed round by word of mouth and for several weeks members of the nuclear disarmament movement used them to harass and, if possible, to disrupt the communications system.

The demonstration at RSG-12 in Dover Castle on 5 May was followed by a break-in by local activists, who discovered further secret papers about the RSG system. Unfortunately, lacking confidence in their own ability to make use of the material and knowledge of who else might be able to do so, they handed the papers over to the secretary of the Committee of 100 and the editor of Peace

News - both of whom had expressed support for the Spies for Peace at Easter. But these two leading figures in the anti-war movement not only disposed of the material but even rebuked those responsible for this skilful and entirely successful action.

But such action continued to be the subject of both private and public discussion during summer 1963. In June the text of Beyond Counting Arses was reprinted by Solidarity (2:11) to provide documentation for this discussion. Also in June a pamphlet with the acronymic title Resistance Shall Grow was published by a coalition of groups in the libertarian left (the Independent Labour Party, the London Anarchists, Solidarity, the Syndicalist Workers Federation, and a section of the London Committee of 100); in July it was reprinted as Anarchy 29. Subtitled 'The Story of the Spies for Peace and Why They Are Important for Your Future', this described the events of Easter 1963 and the repercussions, with particular attention to the reactions of the authorities, the press, and the orthodox left.

[redacted]

In September a Solidarity Pamphlet by Nicolas Walter on The RSGs, 1919-1963 filled in the historical background of the emergency government system since the First World War. By this time, the authorities, having failed to lay their hands on the Spies for Peace, drew their own lesson from the episode, and also in September an official report on Civil Defence outlined the RSG system for the first time in public. Already the structure had been modified to provide for the likely dismemberment of the regions by a nuclear attack; and over the next few years the Civil Defence organisation was completely dismantled, though no doubt a skeleton system survived. In a way, the Spies for Peace succeeded completely.

This was illustrated when Peter Watkins' television film The War Game was first suppressed by the BBC and then released for cinema showing in 1966; and also when Peter Laurie's investigation of the civil defence system was printed in the Sunday Times colour magazine on 10 December 1967, and later expanded into his book Beneath the City Streets (1970).

Both began with the information revealed by the Spies for Peace, but both went far beyond anything they had said. Because the Spies for Peace had managed to publish their pamphlet and then to evade detection, they sank into public oblivion and their work was taken for granted.

[redacted]

But the Spies for Peace had aimed at something more than merely discrediting the Civil Defence system, and by the autumn of 1963 they resumed their work. The group had kept constantly in touch, and had also remained active in other ways. Members were among the representatives of CND and the Committee of 100 who confronted Bernard Levin on That Was The Week That Was on 20 April, and among the hecklers at the public meeting on 28 April when CND leaders offered their belated approval to the Spies for Peace (and made an idiotic appeal to give themselves up!). Several members took part in the Committee of 100 demonstrations during the summer at Marham (May) and Porton (June), during Greek Week (July) and the subsequent Committee convoy to Greece, as well as in the Cuban Embassy demonstration (July) and the Notting Hill anti-eviction struggle (August). But, when the Committee once more relapsed into the same paralysis as had afflicted it before Easter, the group was re-formed.

At this point two members dropped out of any further activity, and two new members were brought in to replace them. At various times during this period other people took part in specific activities on a temporary basis, but the hard core did not change.

The aim of the Spies for Peace remained the same. But now their task was more difficult. It would not be sufficient to repeat their work; it was necessary to move forward and do better than before. They had discovered and exposed the RSG system; now they set out to discover the emergency government system behind it. They had acquired the essential trust in each other and the basic expertise and experience for this kind of activity. So once more they withdrew from other activities and began work.

The first area to be explored was the deep shelters in London which had been constructed during the Second World War. Papers found in Warren Row had shown that the RSG system had not been activated during the Cuba crisis in October 1962, which had immediately

followed the Fallex system that proved the uselessness of the whole system.

The group decided to see what had been done with the deep shelters, and they picked on the one near Belsize Park underground station, as being the easiest to break into without risk of detection. The shelter was raided on 28 September 1963, and they discovered that it not only had been unused during the Cuba crisis but was unusable at any time, since its fittings were all either dismantled or derelict. But nothing much could be made of that on its own.

The next area to be explored was the enormous military complex near Corsham, just east of Bath on the main London-Bristol road and railway. Contacts at the CND annual conference in October reported local suspicions that this was the site of the emergency central seat of government, and the group decided to see what could be discovered.

A preliminary visit was made in November, and two thorough searches were made during December. The whole area was combed, and several installations were broken into; but the group found it impossible to get far enough into the complex to confirm their strong suspicions about it without taking excessive risks, and the operation was temporarily suspended.

[redacted]

Instead the group turned to the communications system near Chancery Lane underground station. Attempts were made to break into various places during January 1964, but again they found it impossible to penetrate the system without more drastic measures. At several meetings the group discussed - both alone and with sympathetic contacts - the possibility of cracking the system in other ways, whether by planning a public demonstration to draw attention to it and trying to get in during a diversion, or else by mounting a more determined assault altogether. But in the end it was decided to proceed no further because the operation seemed unlikely to succeed.

Another visit was made to the West Country in February, this time in the area of the Mendips, where other contacts suggested the central seat of government might be located. A long search ended with the discovery of a mysterious site at Temple Cloud, but when this was raided it turned out to be a Home Office Supply and Transport Store. A great deal of equipment was found in it, but no important papers.

Yet another visit was made to the West Country in May, but again nothing was discovered. By this time attention had been turned elsewhere, as a result of work by another group active in East London. In March the Ilford Civil Defence headquarters was broken into, and some of the papers found there were passed on to the Spies for Peace. References were found to a site near Kelvedon Hatch in Essex which sounded interesting.

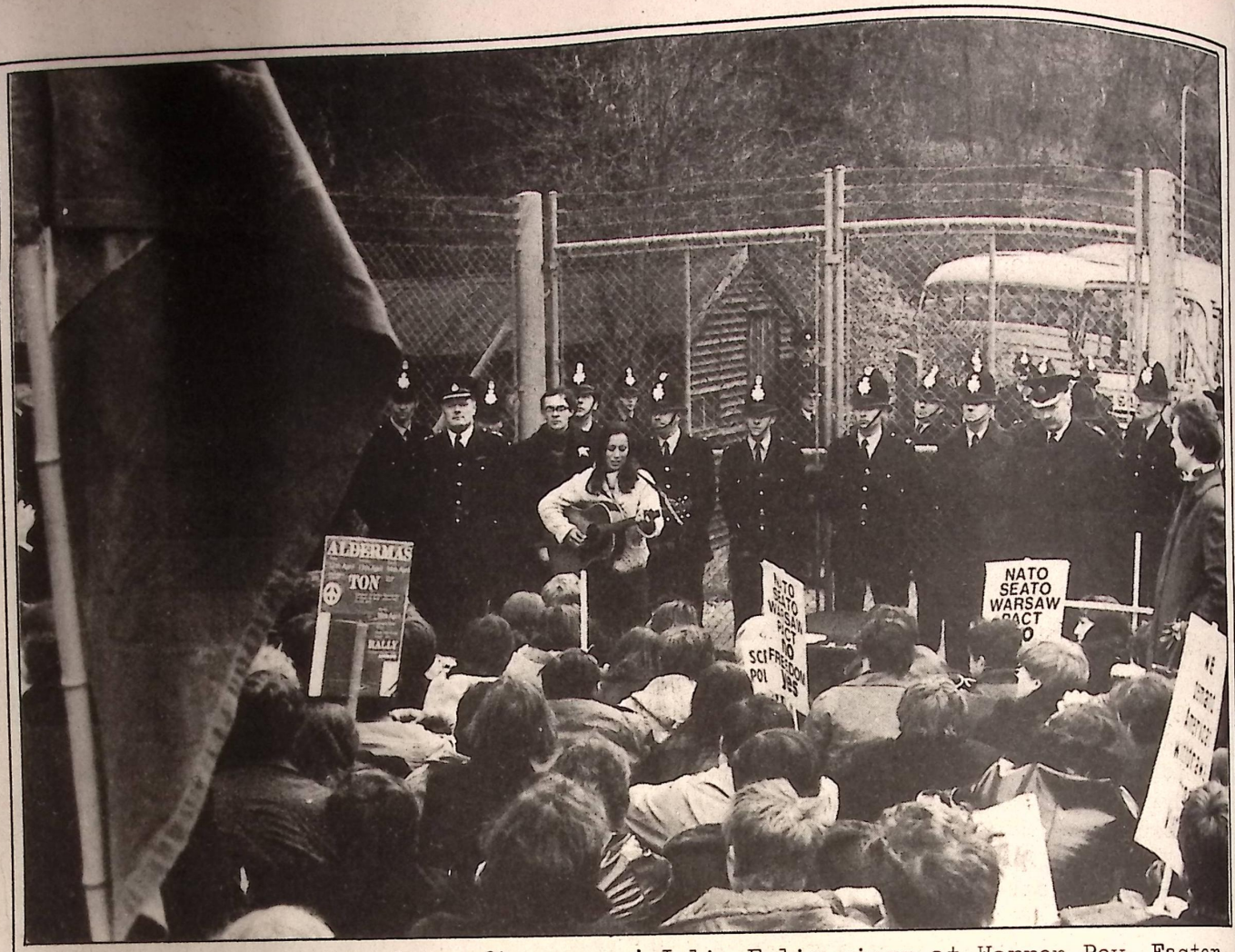
[redacted]

The site was located after a short search, and broken into on 29 March, Easter Sunday, at the time of the Easter March. Kelvedon Hatch turned out to be an intriguing place, since it combined a Sub-Regional headquarters in the RSG system with a Group headquarters in the Royal Observer Corps system. A great deal of material was removed from the huge bunkers at Kelvedon Hatch, and much of it was found to be interesting; but most of it related to the ROC structure and its exercises, which were not worth the trouble of exposing.

One particularly important item of information that did emerge was that the London Region, whose RSG had been strangely missing from the material found in Warren Row, had apparently been eliminated from the system altogether, and divided up between the Eastern, Southern and South-Eastern regions, so that London was to be ruled by Regional Commissioners in Cambridge, Warren Row and Dover; the various sectors of the capital were to be administered from Sub-Regional headquarters, of which Kelvedon Hatch was the one for East London north of the Thames.

The implication was that in the event of nuclear war London would be virtually abandoned to its fate - but this was no news for anyone who had read the original Spies for Peace pamphlet, and again it was not worth the trouble of exposing on its own.

Further developments in East London put an end to work in that area. In May the Wanstead Civil Defence headquarters was broken into. In August three people were arrested and charged with the Ilford and Wanstead break-ins. There was some dramatic publicity for a time, but in the event the proceedings were confined to events in East London and the wider implications were obscured.



Julie Felix sings at Warren Row, Easter Saturday 1968

The defendants were given large fines, which were soon raised by sympathisers.

Another area again was Wales, where several contacts pointed out suspicious sites in various parts of the country. Visits were made several times during the spring and summer of 1964, large areas were explored, and some sites were examined; but no hard information ever emerged.

On 16 and 17 October 1964, just after the General Election which brought Labour back into power, two final visits were made to the Corsham complex, and the most determined efforts so far were made to break into appropriate sites. But yet again the task proved impossible and the operation had to be terminated once and for all.

The Spies for Peace always felt - and still feel - that Corsham was the most likely place to yield information comparable with that found in Warren Row. They took their failure to discover its secret as a sign of the failure of this particular technique by this particular group at this particular time, and they therefore ceased to work as a group at the end of 1964.

During all this time a parallel but completely independent response to the situation in the Committee of 100 had taken place in Scotland. Some Glasgow activists who had attended the Way Ahead conference in February 1963 were impressed by the arguments of Beyond Counting Arses, and developed their ideas in a similar way.

The first public indication of this phenomenon was the appearance at the Holy Loch demonstration on 25 May 1963 of a duplicated leaflet called How to disrupt, obstruct and subvert the Warfare State, and signed 'Scots Against War'. This was followed by an irregular series of publications over the next couple of years, aimed at stimulating radical activity in the nuclear disarmament movement.

This activity was not confined to argument, and sabotage became frequent and widespread from 1963 to 1966. Several fires were started at the Holy Loch and Faslane bases, and many Civil Defence and Army offices all over the country were broken into and often wrecked. Occasionally some individuals were arrested, but the authorities preferred to keep things quiet. Few charges were brought, and only fines

were imposed. The Scots Against War group was never broken, but in the end it faded away.

In June 1966 the Scottish Solidarity group published as its first pamphlet A Way Ahead, which was a collection of the articles on the Scots Against War and the sabotage issue printed in both Scotland and London, with editorial comments. The subtitle was 'For a New Peace Movement', but the pamphlet actually marked the end of the old one. Nevertheless, the career of the Scots Against War, inspired by the same ideas as the Spies for Peace (and frequently in informal contact with them), may be seen as one of the most successful practical assaults on the military system mounted by the whole nuclear disarmament movement.

The Spies for Peace themselves remained active after the end of their specific work. They had already joined the Committee of 100 demonstration at Bentwaters on 23 May and the picnic at Warren Row on 16 August during 1964. Following the successful pirate radio broadcasts against the General Election of October 1964 in South London, they joined a new group of Radio Pirates which set out to combine old methods of gathering information with new methods of distributing it.

But they left the group before its first (and last) broadcasts at Easter 1965. The theme of the messages was to be the secret Civil Defence plans for London, and some of the material accumulated by the Spies for Peace was used in preparing the texts. But the treatment was sensationalised and the organisational and technical defects of the group were such that it collapsed.

Despite this failure to revive the work of the Voice of Nuclear Disarmament, the Spies for Peace joined the demonstration at the end of the 1965 Easter March called for by the broadcasts (whose texts were distributed in pamphlet form). This was at the Rotundas in Monck Street, Westminster, which were suspected to be the site of the London RSG (if any) or even of the emergency seat of government.

After this the members of the group were involved in frequent appropriate activities. Some helped to produce the fake American dollars bearing slogans against the Vietnam War during 1966 and 1967. Several took part in the Brighton Church demonstration in October 1966.

A few were involved in the springing of George Blake from Wormwood Scrubs in October 1966. Several took part in the Greek Embassy demonstration in April 1967. Some joined the Committee of 100 demonstration at the Corsham complex in May 1967.

At a late stage tenuous connections were made with a new tendency on the libertarian left. One of the contacts of the Spies for Peace, who had been prominent in the Radio Pirates, was involved in an attempt to fire a harmless rocket at the Greek Embassy in 1967; the attempt was a fiasco, but also a portent of things to come. And after the first shooting of the American Embassy in August 1967, the police raids of Committee of 100 militants involved a few members of the Spies for Peace.

None of the group was in fact involved in the developments culminating in the Angry Brigade, but these connections were not entirely coincidental.

In 1968 some of the Spies for Peace joined the Aldermaston march on the Easter Saturday to take part in a YCND demonstration at Warren Row. This commemorated their success five years earlier; but it also marked their failure to achieve any further success, and indeed the final failure of the movement as a whole - for that was the last Aldermaston march, and 1968 also saw the disbandment of the Committee of 100 and its replacement as the vanguard of the radical left by the new student movement.

Yet just as the Committee of 100 is still important in the history of the radical left, the Spies for Peace are important in the history of the Committee of 100, both for what they did and for what they did not do. When they met for a 10th anniversary reunion this Easter, they were able to look back on their work without regret - and how many political groups can do that?

Their only regret is that they were unable to do more work, and that their example was not followed - as it has been in the United States. The radical left has tended instead to turn towards symbolic confrontation and petty violence, forgetting the double lesson of 10 years ago: if you think something should be done, do it yourself; but do something which is worth doing and which can be followed by others.

Philippines:

This report, which we have received from the People's News Service, is by an American journalist recently deported from the Philippines after living and working there for over five years

Since 23 September last year the Philippines have been under martial law. President Marcos is now reported to be seeking SEATO military intervention against the guerilla forces which threaten his dictatorship. And the American ambassador, Henry Byroade is said to have told Washington recently that the situation is 'beyond the capacity of the Philippines' armed forces to contain'.

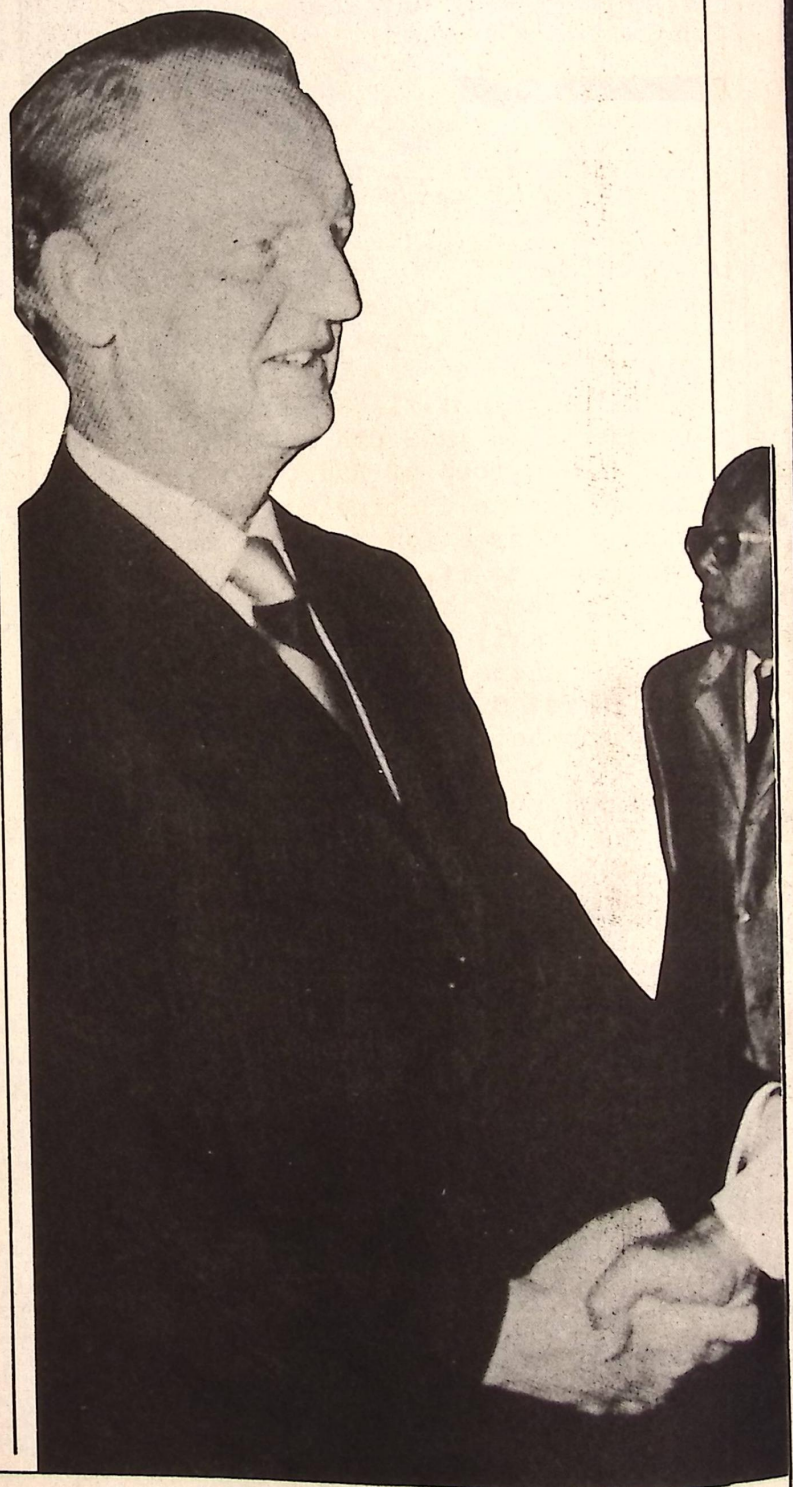
With some 18,000 US troops already stationed in the country at five major bases - including Clark Air Force Base, home of the 13th Air Force, and Subic Naval Base, home-port of the entire Seventh Fleet - America is already there. The 'Vietnamisation' of the Philippines is already well-advanced: the liberation forces revealed last year that napalm and cluster-bomblets are used against them. Since September, and particularly since the withdrawal from Vietnam, much of America's counter-insurgency technology is now based in the Philippines.

Already American 'advisers' - sometimes in uniform - have helped the Philippine intelligence corps in the interrogation of political prisoners. And in February a priest said he had witnessed an American Cobra gunship firing on unarmed peasants working in their rice paddy.

When Marcos imposed martial law on 23 September, he was quick to say 'This is not a military takeover,' and 'Everything we do is for the people.' But, speaking to his military brass three days later, he was less restrained and showed his reliance upon the military to carry out his orders: 'I have complete faith and trust in you.'

Last November Marcos told the Philippine Historical Association he had decided to proclaim martial law after consulting God and receiving 'several signs' from Him to act. 'It seems as if I was being led and guided by some strange mind above me.' He did not say what signs he had received. Whatever they may have been, Marcos has since said that he is 'guided by God's awesome grace'.

It must be stressed that the Martial Law Proclamation No 1081 came as no real surprise to most Filipinos. The tense



the next Vietnam?

Marcos greets Marshall Green, Nixon's Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

atmosphere which prevailed throughout the country before the official pronouncement had been building up over the past three and a half years of Marcos' second term in office - indeed since he first assumed power in December, 1965. The period saw him consistently and openly fortifying his position, while he eroded nearly every shred of credibility which he may have had in the eyes of the Filipino people years back.

The problems which had faced the country in 1965 grew markedly. Being a virtual plaything of Wall Street, the Philippine economy has long suffered from severe internal and external debt pains; the estimated external debt is now close to 83 billion, counting large, high-interest loans extended to Marcos since September by various countries - including Britain.

In 1946, when the US granted 'independence' to a war-ravaged, suffering nation, treaties were rammed through granting Washington economic and military concessions on Philippine soil which clearly were more beneficial by far to the Americans than to the Filipinos. American corporations and citizens were given 'parity', permitting them access to 'the disposition, exploitation, development and utilisation of all agricultural lands and other natural resources of the Philippines' - as if they themselves were Filipinos.

This lopsided arrangement, enjoyed nowhere else in the world, induced more than 800 American companies and numerous individual investors to set up their operations. In real terms, official Central Bank figures have shown the result of this penetration and control in the domestic economy. For every dollar inwardly invested, more than six dollars were sent back to the US in the form of repatriated disbursements - profits. This is the rawest imperialism.

Dozens of other economic sores grew out of the main one. The vast sums of public money spent by party politicians increased many fold when Marcos assumed office. Conservative estimates of the amount which he squandered in massive vote-buying and extravagant campaigning to engineer his re-election in 1969 range at around £26 million. Nearly one-third of total imports before martial law was somehow tied to smuggled goods - 'blue-seal' cigarettes, camera films, perfumes, transistor radios, textiles, etc.

Corruption yielded the President and his shrinking circle of loyal friends yet-unknown amounts of illegitimate

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income, most of which was deposited in Swiss banks. The Manila Chronicle observed sagaciously in 1971 'Corruption is so bad that it could become a tourist attraction.'

All the while, as the rich grew richer, the poor not only grew poorer, but also angrier with the escalating trend of repression which the President dealt out against those who challenged him most effectively. While he was quick to allege that his detractors were part of a grand conspiracy against him, he did little to change the situation for the better. Instead, as had been the refrain since he was re-elected, he and his lieutenants freely discussed the subject of martial law, and in August 1971, he suspended habeas corpus.

The sudden move came after an opposition Liberal Party rally was bombed, injuring all of the candidates and killing nine bystanders - mostly children. The bombing was never solved by the administration, which was quick to accuse the Communists, though much of the public believed the crime was in fact inspired by Marcos himself, to demobilise or kill the members of the opposing party - and to provide him with a 'justification' for suspending civil rights.

With the support of the 'Nixon Doctrine', Marcos determinedly built up the military. His Secretary of Defence spent 10 days in Washington during March, 1972 and two weeks after his return to Manila, a 'self-reliant defence program' was announced. Its main intention is to establish a mini-military industrial complex in the country.

Under the terms of the military aid pact of 1947 the country was forbidden to buy or manufacture a single bullet without the specific sanction of the Pentagon - which of course was neither requested nor granted in those 25 years. This time the sanction was there, and the cost to be borne both by the Pentagon and the Filipino people was set at 1.5 billion pesos (about £100 million).

During 1972 Filipinos witnessed the systematic infiltration by the military into vital civilian spheres. Some 33 high-ranking military officers, all faithful Marcos men, many of whom had trained in the United States, had been strategically placed by President Marcos in key positions. The machinery of repression was ready.

The loyal military forces, which, according to the President, 'can be given all the power, to utilize with restraint, sensitivity of the heart and the noblest of motivation,' became the most visible badge of the regime on 23 September. The mystical 'restraint' and 'sensitivity' of the military men was apparent in their behaviour.

During the mass arrests in the weeks following the proclamation, soldiers threatened captives with death and with rumours that several long-term political prisoners had been taken before summary firing squads inside military camps. A busload of students is said to have been massacred while escaping from Manila to the provinces.

In northern Isabela province, 53,000 peasants were forcibly ejected from their villages as Vietnam-style 'free-fire zones' were declared against the New People's Army guerrillas, whose ranks had swelled since before the proclamation of martial law.

Troops pushed Manila doors down in the middle of the night, terrorising the old and hitting anyone who looked like a student activist in the face with the butts of their guns. One report even trickled out from Manila that 300 radical students and workers were taken up in aircraft over the South China Sea - and pushed out. Presumably, this report will be vehemently denied by the regime, but it comes from a conscience-stricken American 'adviser' - and the 300 have neither been heard from nor seen since. The number of political prisoners at present is not known - but it is estimated at more than 10,000.

Though Marcos spoke eloquently on 23 September of building a 'New Society' through reform, most local observers agreed it was hardly necessary to employ martial law to do so. The real motive for it was shown by a 'questionnaire', duplicated and distributed by Marcos' men during the so-called 'citizen's assemblies' in January, in advance of the national plebiscite which Marcos eventually cancelled on 17 January. The President had failed to win the people's support for his regime or his 'smiling martial law'. Else, why the need to contrive questions and then answer them?

QUESTIONNAIRE

1 Question - Do you approve of the Citizen's Assembly as the base of popular government to decide issues affecting our people?
Answer - Yes, in order to broaden the base of citizens participation in Government.

2 Question - Do you approve of the New Constitution?
Answer - Yes, but we do not want Ad Interim Assembly to be convoked at all, it should not be done until after at least seven (7) years from the approval of the New Constitution by the Citizen's Assemblies.

3 Question - Do you want a plebiscite to be called to ratify the New Constitution?
Answer - No need. The vote of the Citizen's Assemblies should already be considered the plebiscite on the New Constitution. If the Citizen's Assemblies approve of the New Constitution, then the New Constitution should be deemed ratified.

4 Question - Do you want to hold elections in November 1973 as provided for under the 1935 Constitution?
Answer - No. We are sick and tired of too frequent elections. We are fed up with politics, of the many debates and so much expenses.

5 Question - If the election in 1973 will not be held, when do you want the next elections to be called?
Answer - Probably a period of at least seven (7) years moratorium on elections will be enough for stability to be established in the country, for reform to take root and normalcy to return.

6 Question - Do you want Martial Law to continue?
Answer - Yes. We want Pres. Marcos to continue Martial Law. We want him to exercise his powers with more authority. We want him to be strong and firm so that we can accomplish all his reform programs and establish normalcy in the country. If all other measures fail, we want Pres. Marcos to declare a revolutionary government along the lines of the New Constitution without the Ad Interim Assembly.

[redacted]

The facade of the 'New Society' is wearing thin, as Marcos' actual intentions become clearer: to stay in power with or without reform, no matter how it is done. The President's clever wife, Mrs Imelda Marcos, was to be the candidate for the presidency (the 1935 Constitution disallowed a third consecutive term in office), until Proclamation No 1081 - her own popularity is shown by an attempted assassination on 7 December.

Recently Mrs Marcos quietly visited London to see her children who are studying here, as well as to seek additional capital investments for the regime. She was on her way home from America where the White House had refused to issue her an invitation to Nixon's inaugural ceremony. Then early in February, it is reported by witnesses that Mrs Marcos went to the offices of the New York Times and in tears begged the publishers to treat her husband more kindly.

After the 1971 election, when all but one of her husband's eight chosen party candidates for the Philippine Senate lost by wide margins, Mrs Marcos said to a friend: 'Do you think that having got this far, we will let go? Remember, we have the Army.' Maybe now, having lost the support of a large segment of the population, the Marcos family will take heed of what one alienated senator, Jose W Diokno, imprisoned since September, said last July: 'You can build a throne with bayonets - but you cannot sit on it.'

Note: the Association for Radical East Asian Studies, 6 Endsleigh Street, WC1, is publishing a series of six bulletins on the Philippines at 25p/75 cents.

[redacted]

Parkhurst: a fancy flash truncheon

The third and last instalment of Tony Blyth's account of life in Parkhurst

I've been in the B1 punishment cell on bread and water, 15 days of the stuff. And the warders really do everything they can to rub it in. They love to aggravate you when you are in the punishment cell. I've had warders shouting so as I can hear that they are going home to have a nice big steak for dinner. When you are doing bread and water and you hear the warders talking about food it really does you up as your belly rumbles, crying out for food and at night you wake up starving.

Another little trick the warders love doing is to open your cell door and shout: 'All right, slop out.' Slop out means you have to empty your plastic chamber pot and take your plastic water jug and get some water from the toilet. If you're in the strong box you don't slop out as you can't come out of the strong box at any time.

But when you do slop out the warders time it just right so as you see all the prisoners' dinners on the table. If you are on bread and water and you see the food on the table it just drives you crazy. At the same time the warders stand there looking at you with a big grin on their faces.

The warders will never open your cell door unless all the five are there. The reason for this is a fear of the prisoners they have beaten and also aggravated every day, as they know that a man can only take so much and then he will blow up. This is what the warders want so as they can jump on you and beat you all round the punishment cells.

The warders also play little games with each other. They do this out of boredom as all they do all day is sit down drinking tea. That's one of the reasons the warders love working down the B1 punishment cell as it is such a lazy job. When all the prisoners are locked up in their cells what work is there for the five warders to do?

To break up this boredom they must find something to do. Beating and aggravating prisoners is one way. The other way is: the five warders run up and down the punishment corridor, chasing each other and whipping each other with the long leather strap on their truncheon. I have heard the warders play this game time and time again. You can hear the shouting when one gets hit with the leather strap handle on the truncheon. Then you hear all the other warders laughing like a lot of schoolgirls.

I have gone to slop out and I have seen the warders standing there like Wild West gun fighters, practising who can draw their truncheon the fastest.

The truncheon is kept in a side pocket on the right hand side of their trousers. A lot of warders love a fancy flash truncheon. What they do is to cut the leather strap handle three ways and then plait it all fancy. Some of them even go so far as to get a piece of white leather and make a handle out of that.

When you see a warder with big hobnail boots, SS shape hat and a fancy handle on his truncheon trying his best to look just like the Gestapo, straightaway in your mind you think: 'Dog. A right little rat. Watch him always.'

Some warders just aggravate you so that you jump on them as not only do about 10 warders beat you up, the warder you have hit then has about eight weeks sick leave on full pay at home. Which the warder loves as he ain't got to work

Mountbatten starts his prison security check after George Blake's escape, 1966

and he's still getting paid for it. It's holiday with pay for him.

The burglars are warders whose job it is to do nothing else but look after the security of the prison. These warders really do look like Gestapo. They have big hobnail boots. Their hats are shaped just the same as the Gestapo, slashed peak, and over the top of their blue serge uniform they wear a blue carpenter's apron with big pockets in the front of them. In the pockets they keep the tools they use to search your cell.

When the burglars come to get you for a turnover (search) there are always two of them. They take you from whatever shop you are working in to your cell. The burglars literally tear your cell apart from top to bottom. They don't miss a thing. They get everything you have in your cell and just sling it all over the floor. They tear your photos off the walls to see if you have anything hid behind them. They go through all your papers and letters, rip the backs of books to see that you don't have anything stuck behind the cover. They have the back off your radio and poke about inside and pull wires apart to make sure you haven't got a VHF radio.

If you have a fish tank the burglars turn it upside down into a bucket to make sure you don't have anything in the tank. I don't remember the burglars finding anything you shouldn't have in a fish tank.

If you have a budgerigar in your cell you always keep your window shut so the bird can't get away. But the burglars open your window so as they can test your cell window bars to make sure that they ain't out.

The burglars run Parkhurst, as they can stop anything in the prison or stop you having anything. They just say 'security' and that covers everything.

The burglars are used by the other warders. If a warder has it in for you he just says to the burglars 'Turn so-and-so's cell over'. Then when the burglars turn you over they find something in your cell and the next thing you know you are on report in front of the governor and he gives you 14 days in the punishment cell. You then know that the warder who has had it in for you has won. He has done you cunning by using the burglars to nick you. Plus you know that what the burglars found in your cell was not there when you went to work.

The burglars always strip you in your cell and make you bend down. They stand behind you and pass some kind of comment in the hope that it will provoke you.

Once, every day for two or three weeks, when everyone was getting their tea or dinner, one of the warders had newspaper cuttings on the table which you had to pass to get your dinner. These newspaper cuttings were headlines like 'Bring back the rope', 'Hang police and warder killers'. About 20 of these cuttings would be put on the table so everyone could see them.

A lot of ill-feeling was caused by these silly, petty newspaper cuttings as at Parkhurst there were a lot of men doing life, who had been sentenced to death and been in the death cell but had been reprieved. All these men want is to be left alone in peace so they can settle down and wait for the day they are released from prison, so they can live a normal life again with their wife and kids. Most men who are released after a life sentence never get into trouble again.

These men don't want to be reminded of the past. But the warders don't like to see a man settle down and make good. If you are in prison for robbery with violence, armed robbery, organised crime or any type of violence, the warders really hate you. Yet the sex cases, baby killers and baby beaters the warders really get on with. The warders are always laughing and having jokes with them, the grass is the same.

I once overheard a sex killer telling a warder how he killed a young girl and raped her. I looked at the warder's face and it was all twisted in a funny way and his eyes were shining. The warder was really excited to the point of orgasm. A little while later both warder and sex case prisoner were laughing hysterically.

The warders often ask the sex case prisoners to lend them the transcript of their trial, for this the warder will lend the sex case a pin-up book.

Durham: good enough for the pigs

Below is an account of life in Durham by an ex-prisoner

I have been in a few prisons since 1947 and in most of them I have been beaten up by the screws (Dartmoor, Parkhurst, Durham). I remember in November 1949, in Durham, two prisoners were provoked by a screw for days. In the end one of the prisoners did his nut and attacked the screw. The prisoner was beaten unconscious and left in a cell for two days and nobody went near him - no, not even a doctor.

The Church Army captain, who tried to do something for the prisoner, was told by the screws to keep out - or else. The prisoners were taken outside to the Assize court where they got eight and 10 years. When the prisoner told the judge he had been beaten up he was given an extra six months on top of his 10 years for false accusation.

Last year a prisoner was beaten up. The men went on strike over it and asked the governor to bring the prisoner on to the exercise yard so we could see him - which the governor did. The prisoner had a bruised face and a black eye. When we asked him what had happened he told us he had not been beaten up. But it was obvious to us that he had. The screws told him to say that and he would get a good job. A week later he did, the scab.

When a prisoner is beaten up in Durham they take him into the strong box, strip him naked and leave him there for a couple of days without clothes. The strong box is about eight feet long by 10 feet wide and about 18 feet high. The bed is a concrete slab and the seat is concrete as well. It is bloody cold with no clothes on and your feet are freezing if you try to walk up and down the conrete floor.

We had a hunger strike last year over the food which was bloody awful. It is nothing to find part of a mouse or cock-roaches in your dinner and snails in the cabbage. When the governor was told what was going on, he said it was good enough for the pigs - meaning us, the prisoners.

The screws go round putting salt in the prisoners' tea. And if the prisoners complain they get a 'It's good enough for you' and the screws have a big laugh over it.

They go round the prisoners' cells ripping pin-ups off the walls, ripping up the beds and spilling soap powder and all that on the floor. They also pinch paperback books and take them home with them.

They do anything to try and provoke prisoners and if the prisoners complain they are nicked for false accusations, if they can't prove what they say is true. Then they could more than likely get a VC (visiting committee) and that could cost them remission. So a prisoner just can't win. There is a hard core of 12 or so screws who delight in looking for trouble with the cons.

There are no cell hobbies in Durham now. Once you could make things in your cell at night-time but not with this governor. He is a right nazi-type bastard.

Note: Who Guards the Guards? by Brian Stratton, which we mentioned in INSIDE STORY 7, will be published soon - though not by a commercial publisher. We hope to review the book, which describes life in Parkhurst, in the next INSIDE STORY, together with Psychological Survival on Durham by Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor.

books

Up against the state

Our legal correspondent reviews Guilty until proved innocent? (Release Lawyers Group, 40p), The NCCL Guide (NCCL/ Penguin, 50p), Bust Book (Action Books, 1970 - now out of print) and Up Against the Law No 2 (c/o Release, 15p).

In the summer of 1972 the Criminal Law Revision Committee, largely composed of judges, prosecutors and academics, published its eleventh report. It recommended radical reforms in the rules of evidence, effectively ending the right to silence, which every suspected or accused person has in this country, and abolishing the caution, which tells you that you have the right to silence.

The Committee's ideas about the admissibility of previous misconduct, corroboration and hearsay evidence are stamped with a similar bias: the intention is to tip the scales even further than at present against those of us who come up against the criminal law, at a time when relations between the law and the people are becoming increasingly strained.

The Release Lawyers Group report Guilty until proved Innocent? attacks the recommendations of the CLRC and the assumptions on which they are based. It is a dry, flat piece of writing - as readable as anything written by a committee.

The section on the present situation in the courts is based on these lawyers' day-to-day experience in defending people. They describe what happens: how the system operates against accused and suspected persons; how some people are particularly vulnerable in this situation. They expose police methods of interrogation, the prejudice of judges and magistrates, the difficulty of getting legal aid and so on.

There is no doubt that the writers know what they are talking about. They insist that the CLRC ignores and denies what is really happening; that the bulk of their proposals will make a bad situation worse and that there is an urgent need to provide real safeguards for people in police stations and on trial - rather than taking away the flimsy protection that now exists.

They discuss the implications of the CLRC's proposals in great detail in the latter part of the book and make suggestions of their own - eg, duty solicitors as a safeguard during police interrogation. This discussion, though in fairly simple language, is complicated and technical: it is aimed at people with a very strong personal or professional interest in the law and will be read mostly by them.

The report is the fruit of some years' cooperation between these professional lawyers and Release in helping the kinds of people most threatened by the CLRC's recommendations. For the contributors it was a new experience to make a stand together as defence lawyers, generalising from their own experience.

But the group's collective discussions revealed how strong a personal and professional stake even these lawyers have in showing that the law is - or could be - fair: a lawyer is, after all, an officer of the court.

One of the group argued that the report should include a reference to the importance of ensuring that the guilty should be convicted. This argument was was successfully resisted on the grounds that it was not the concern of defence lawyers to help the prosecution do its dirty work.

Another lawyer was outraged by the suggestion that the law of theft was only intended to stop the poor stealing from the rich, not from one another, and that this was the only area where it was enforced at all effectively.

If you're a defence lawyer you have to act on the assumption that the police are liars, thieves, thugs and completely without scruple - at the same time you have to cooperate with the police and the court. You have to be polite to judges who are tyrants, who will often ask you to discipline your clients in court. You can refuse, but most feebly comply. In the pubs opposite the Old Bailey lawyers and policemen can be seen drinking together - and not just prosecution lawyers either.

The complicity between defence and prosecution is illustrated by the 'deals' which are frequently made - the defendant pleads guilty to a lesser charge after an assurance that more serious ones will be dropped. Both Sean O'Toole and the Hyde Park Three (whose cases we reported on briefly in INSIDE STORY 5) made deals with the prosecution to

escape jail sentences - see also Mike Callinan's letter in INSIDE STORY 8.

But a handful of defence lawyers, who tend to be associated with organisations like the NCCL and Release, have rejected the role of accomplices with the state, have challenged the arbitrary power of police and prosecution - and have shown that cases can be won. They have helped to make people aware that they need not be passive victims of the judicial system.

The NCCL Guide by Anna Coote, journalist, and Larry Grant, full-time solicitor at the NCCL, is a handbook on the law as it affects ordinary people. It tells you your rights and what the law is in all the areas where you are likely to need to know.

The Guide is well laid out, easy to read, full of information and useful addresses. It covers areas like immigration and citizenship where there is hardly any readily available practical information - or where the bodies who might provide it are precisely those whose interpretation of the law one is up against (eg, the Home Office).

But the book's tone is muted compared to what NCCL workers will say when you're talking to them. Then they admit that people don't have rights in this country unless they're rich and powerful and advise more unconventional solutions to legal problems than you will find in the Guide.

[redacted]

Lawyers and people giving legal advice find the book useful in conjunction with their background of information and practical experience. But inexperienced people have to go beyond it in order to deal with police, magistrates, landlords and government bodies. They will need to ring up friendly solicitors, find out the personal vagaries of the people they are dealing with, get advice and support from friends, people who know people, sympathetic organisations.

Sometimes it may be advisable to give the policeman his bribe, intimidate your landlord, refuse to pay the rent, stay on after you've been told to leave, organise a picket outside the court, lose your temper in the dock, lie, steal or use violence yourself - rather than go through the usual channels or politely repeat what you hope is the law and expect to be treated as a decent, rational human being.

But you can't expect such advice from a Penguin book and it is useless to quarrel with the NCCL Guide for not providing it: we only seem to learn unconventional methods from bitter experience.

The NCCL Guide and the Release report illustrate the contradictory situation in which our liberal lawyers find themselves. The report implies that, where the system is not administered justly, reforms should be made to ensure that in future it is. The writers, like all liberals, behave as though all the barriers to change were ideological or based on prejudice, that they can all be overcome by rationality and debate.

[redacted]

But it's not like that at all. The function of the law has always been to protect the interests of the ruling class and the state: 'justice' in a class society can only be a myth.

As the class struggle has sharpened in the last few years, the function of the law has been revealed more clearly. What the state tried to do in the Mangrove trial was to smash black political organisation, particularly in Notting Hill. The state prosecution of five members of the Anti-Internment League is part of the attempt to destroy organised protest about British crimes in Ireland.

Also the state has attempted to use the law to do things it hasn't done so explicitly before. As is widely recognised, the Industrial Relations Act is a blatant attack on working class power and organisation in an area where the law had abstained since the beginning of the century. The Immigration Act 1971 enshrines racism in our law books and creates a new category of second-class citizens in conformity with EEC practice.

This offensive use of the law by the state and the increased number of political prosecutions have been accompanied by a growing distrust of the law and its agents, leading people to ask whether the law itself is legal - and from where the law-makers and law-enforcers derive their legitimacy. And there has also been a widespread disillusionment with lawyers and what they can do for you.

People have been starting to defend themselves, often with the help of a friend in court who does not have to be qualified, known as a Mckenzie man or woman, instead of a defence lawyer. In

political cases Mckenzies don't have the disadvantages of lawyers.

If you tell your lawyer 'Look I'm guilty' he's supposed to refuse to represent you. (Of course there are lawyers working for professional criminals who take no notice of this but most lawyers do.) A Mckenzie is not likely to have the same ethical anxieties about the sanctity of the law and there are no professional pressures to keep the rules.

Self-defence can destroy the court-room's atmosphere of compromise and mediation. A defendant can cross-examine prosecution witnesses directly, saying to a policeman 'You did hit me here, didn't you?' rather than leaving it to a lawyer to say 'I put it to you that you struck my client on the breast'.

By being less formal and detached the defendant can often gain the sympathy of the jury, themselves ordinary people. In the Stoke Newington Eight trial efforts were made to get a working-class jury: to some extent they paid off. Especially if your case depends on facts rather than law you may be able to defend yourself more effectively than a lawyer could.

In political trials there's often a common insistence by defendants on a collective defence - which is alien to the lawyer whose concern is with 'my client'. Again some defendants in the past have resented the tendency of barristers to say in mitigation things which were quite untrue - to present the defendant as a polite and respectable member of society instead of a political militant (though if you do this effectively it will probably be an advantage).

Still the Mckenzie can only help a defendant who's self-confident enough to start with: not being a lawyer means not assuming the responsibility of directing the defence. In one case the defendant was nervous and ill-informed. He leaned on his Mckenzie so that she felt he lost all autonomy: she appeared to be putting words into his mouth.

And it's important to remember that a good defence is what gets you off. It is not part of a revolutionary's function to be a martyr in court. A blend of Mckenzies and barristers can get the best of both worlds, provided the barristers are prepared to help the defendants.

The writers of the Bust Book, 1970, and Up Against the Law, 1973, who have been part of this self-defence movement, see the courts and the law's agents as anything but neutral: they are front-line troops in the battle between the ruling class and the people. Both publications are designed as practical guides and as analyses of the political nature of law enforcement and the necessity to resist it.

The introduction to the Bust Book says: 'In writing this manual we intend to demystify for the people the experiences which surround arrest, trial and sentence in order to reduce the added deterrent which they have as unknown; we hope to help people not to get arrested, to minimise the consequences if they do and to raise our collective consciousness.'

The Bust Book tells it like it is about the police and the courts and gives highly relevant basic advice about how to fight them in simple language which conveys solidarity and comradeship. It is on the whole politically and practically realistic. Being busted is treated as a likely consequence of political activism, but as something to get out of as soon as possible while compromising oneself as little as possible.

Up Against the Law, though its analysis is close to that of the Bust Book, tends to treat the court as a theatrical spectacle full of exciting possibilities. It is angry and defiant. It names the names of suspended, suspected and convicted police officers - often inaccurately - under the heading 'One bad apple' and takes the lid off such 'ruling-class criminals' as the DPP, Robens and Rawlinson.

I feel a bit ambivalent about Up Against the Law. It comes over as a scurrilous, 'let's hate the law and fuck the judge' mag, a legal Private Eye without the upper-class touch. It's fun to read for anyone who's been involved in fighting political cases over the last few years: it expresses a lot of the anger I feel and the wish to expose what goes on down Law Street.

But it won't reach the thousands of people who really need the information and perspective it presents; it won't made anyone change his or her mind because it preaches to the converted.

Its abusive tone and 'right on' rhetoric are off-putting to people who agree with a lot of its ideas and share the experiences of the contributors.

The Bust Book managed to combine political statements with legal information quite successfully: in Up Against the Law the political rhetoric is often way over the top - and the useful information comparatively scanty. It's rather like the end-of-term mag of a self-congratulatory clique of people who've all been around, know the legal scene and have got obsessed with it.

Which leads to the question: how much energy should revolutionaries put into their courtroom appearances? There all your comrades are, in the dock, but how many people can you really reach by what you do in court? You won't convert the judge or the police - that's for sure.

Your friends in the public gallery know where it's at already. The tourists don't know what on earth is happening and there are only 12 jurors to benefit from the political education/confrontation. The press won't report it: if they do it will be as sensationalised theatre.

The best thing you can do for your struggle and yourself is to get off. It's you who are up against it in that court, not the judge - whatever you say to him or think of him. He can send you down for a long time: make sure he doesn't get the chance.

pamphlets

A rather belated attempt to catch up with the boom in pamphlets during the past few months.

The Recurrent Crisis of London (Counter Information Services - 60p), a 68-page 'Anti-Report on the Property Developers', which unlike the first three Anti-Reports analyses not a single capitalist firm but the whole capitalist system in which a few men make a lot of money out of the so-called 'development' of London at the expense of a growing number of homeless and displaced working class inhabitants, with the assistance of the national and municipal authorities of all parties - though there is some emphasis on the particular role of the Stock Conversion and Investment Trust. Thoroughly researched, clearly written, beautifully produced, and very disturbing.

The Coming Crisis of Social Psychology (Keith Paton - 5p), a 16-page duplicated attack by the indefatigable author on the current situation in academic social psychology, beginning with its positivist assumptions, going through its scientific pretensions, its political ideology, its manipulative methods, its dehumanising effects, and its (precisely) social function, and ending with a call for the disestablishment of professional psychology and the destruction of authoritarian roles in general. As lively and stimulating as ever, but badly expressed and produced.

Psychiatry and the Homosexual (Gay Information - 15p), the first Gay Liberation pamphlet, a 32-page printed analysis of the suppression of male homosexuality by professional psychiatrists. Well argued and produced.

Members of the Jury! (Medway Libertarians), a 17-page duplicated transcript of Michael Tobin's defence speech at his trial a year ago (see INSIDE STORY 3). Useful documentation.

An Epileptic in Jail (Asper - 25p), a 20-page duplicated account by Edward Haliburton, founder of 'Asper' (Aid to Sick Prisoners), of his own experiences as an epileptic in prison in 1962, unfortunately mixed up with a very muddled account of political, criminal and medical malpractices of all kinds and not backed up with enough supporting evidence. Very disturbing, but too confused to be completely convincing.

Ceylon: the JVP Uprising of April 1971 (Solidarity - 25p), a 50-page printed analysis of the insurrection of the Janata Vimukhti Peramuna (People's Liberation Front) against the nationalist-Communist-Trotskyist regime of the United Front two years ago. The main points are that the insurgents were young revolutionaries with no links with the working class, that their action was an example of incredibly brave adventurism smashed by incredibly savage repression, and that the Marxists of the West (the Trotskyists above all) have responded with their usual support for 'national liberation' and 'third-worldism' regardless of the real situation. Well produced and well argued.

LSE: A Question of Degree (Solidarity - 5p), a 28-page duplicated description by Bob Dent of his experiences at LSE from 1969 to 1972, produced by Solidarity but not a Solidarity pamphlet because of disagreements within the group about the author's 'political

attitudes and actions'.

Revolutionary Organisation and Open Letter to IS (Solidarity - 5p), a 20-page duplicated reprint of two texts dating from 1961 and 1968 defining the Solidarity position against its Marxist rivals. Handy for students of sectarianism at its most fruitful.

Revolution Past and Present (ORA - 10p), a 33-page duplicated analysis by Tony Fleming of revolutions which have failed in one way or other over the past century and of the 'Current Situation and Possibilities', argued in libertarian Marxist terms of 'the working class seizing power' and coming to conclusions belonging to revolutionary syndicalism or council communism rather than anarchism as such.

The Workers' Next Step (ILP -20p), a 20-page printed pamphlet by Alistair Graham in the new Square One series, arguing from the experience of factory occupations over the past two years that the movement should move towards a conscious demand for full workers' control, but failing to explain exactly what this would imply and involve.

Rent Strike: St Pancras (Pluto Press - 15p), a 26-page printed account by Dave Burn of the great tenants' struggle 13 years ago. Useful for the well-documented narrative of what happened rather than for the predictable analysis of what went wrong - with the conclusion that 'a clear lead was needed', presumably from a good old vanguard party.

Company University: The Hull Sit-in 1972 (Spokesman - 16p), a 28-page printed account by the People First Society of the student campaign against Hull University's investment in its dominant company, Reckitt & Colman, because of its connection with the South African regime, culminating in a 13-day sit-in a year ago. Not so much an analysis as an interim report.

Squat (John Pollard - 20p), an 8-page offset report of a survey made by John Pollard last September of the 300-odd squatters in West Kentish Town, together with some account of the background and recommendations for the future, showing that the squatters are an asset rather than a liability to the area and suggesting that Camden Council should hand over its empty houses to squatters on a rent-free self-help basis. Useful so far as it goes, but short and dear.

Claimants Union Guidebook (National Federation of Claimants Unions - 15p), a 33-page offset revision of the old 'Notes on how to set up a Claimants Union', containing clear and useful recommendations on practical and political points, and emphasising the libertarian and egalitarian nature of the movement.

A Load of Bullshit (National Federation of Claimants Unions - 15p), a 33-page offset 'Counter-Report on the Right to Live' by the East London Claimants Union, being a claimants' reply to the Fisher Inquiry into 'abuses' of Social Security and an effective summary of the various complaints against the SS system.

Wanted: Scabs and SS as Strike Breakers (Anti-Circus and Nottingham Claimants Union - 5p), a two-part 19-page duplicated collection of items on the Mansfield Hosiery strike in Loughborough last year, when Asian workers had to fight the bosses, the union, and the White workers to get some kind of fair treatment. The first part raises the racist and sexist aspects of the episode, and the second analyses the suppressive role of the Social Security system. Badly produced and spoilt by hysterical attacks on the SS.

'You've sure got a lot of gall / to be so useless and all' (68 Poynders Road, London SW4 - 10p), a 31-page duplicated analysis by an anonymous group of claimants of the question 'Have Claimants Unions got a Future?', intended as a reply to The Right to Work or the Fight to Live (see INSIDE STORY 5) and an attack on the 'Lumpen' ideology (described as 'CU theory' or 'peoplism') which sees claimants as a new class, insisting that they are marginal to the working class and suggesting that the effect of this ideology is a combination of extremism and reformism. An interesting variation on an old Marxist and syndicalist theme, despite the silly title and poor production.

notes

Lies

News of the World readers will remember last year's provocative series 'The Strife Makers', which attacked industrial and political militants for being 'determined to smash the system, put an end to our way of life'. At the time the News of the World described the

series as 'wholly responsible, carefully researched and adequately documented' - a claim which anyone who actually read the articles must have found hilarious, to say the least.

For 'The Strife Makers' contained even more lies, distortions and straightforward errors than are usually to be found in such stories. Many people who glanced at the News of the World must have had a good laugh and then forgotten all about it.

But one man, Robin Burrows, didn't find the series funny. On Sunday, October 22, he read this in the News of the World: 'On August 30, at the height of the strike, I watched pickets in action at the Henry Boot site at Corby, Northants.

'Two workmen were injured with bricks. Another man, chased by pickets, was so scared he locked himself in his home. A site office was set on fire, three windows were broken and car tyres were slashed.'

Robin Burrows didn't find this funny because he'd been on picket duty at the Henry Boot site on 30 August - and the 'events', so colourfully described in what purported to be an eye-witness account, just hadn't happened.

[redacted]

Burrows wrote off to the Press Council who told him to write first to the editor of the News of the World. Burrows did so - and the reply included a major concession. While it insisted that the writer of the article, Simon Regan, was 'a reporter of experience and integrity' rather than a 'liar', the editor's letter did not claim that Regan had in fact witnessed the 'events' he reported.

The reply included phrases like 'Work-reported to him that', 'it was dicovered that' and 'Mr Regan was shown (windows that had been broken)'. The editor's letter concluded: 'I am satisfied that what Mr Regan wrote was a substantially fair account of what occurred as far as he could ascertain the facts.'

But Robin Burrows was not satisfied. He wrote again to the Press Council who this time said they needed 'evidence', ie 'signed statements obtained by you from people who support your contention that statements you allege to be fabricated are in fact untrue'.

Burrows wrote again, enclosing three signed statements supporting his complaint. These were from John Holmes, the strike leader, Brian Wright, the local union branch secretary, and John Forshaw, a local councillor. All said that, so far as they knew, no violence had taken place.

On 9 February the Assistant Secretary of the Press Council wrote back saying that there was no reasonable prospect of the complaint succeeding since the three statements 'do not seem to contribute towards your difficulty of proving a negative'.

Now it is commonly assumed that the primary function of the Press Council is to support the newspaper proprietors from their critics, but many people will be surprised that the Council is prepared to be so blatant in carrying out this function. For how can anybody prove the negative of a report which is deliberately vague in the first place? In other words, to prove the negative of 'Two workmen were injured with bricks' is impossible since the 'two workmen' are not identified.

Most ordinary people, unversed in the sophistries with which the Press Council conducts its affairs, would assume that four statements were enough to form the basis of a complaint. Here are some extracts from Robin Burrows' account of what took place.

'30 August, I am certain, was the first day we picketed the Henry Boot site. To start with only two of us turned up at 7.30 in the morning, John Holmes, the strike leader, and myself.

'John Holmes told the local police of our intention and they were there in force. Two of us could not very well picket a site with a radius of two or three miles, so we positioned ourselves at the main entrance road, at least 150-200 yards from the nearest work that was in progress.

[redacted]

'Later a few more pickets turned up and we were able to get the support of the men on the site, who hung around until about 12 o'clock picketing the whole side, asking lorries delivering materials etc to help us by not going onto the side. Most complied but those who wanted to go through were allowed to.

'This was following instructions from John Holmes who did not want violence and therefore public opinion turning against us and the police who were there to see that no violence occurred.

'Violence did not occur and it is easy to see why. The police were in attendance all the while we were picketing. The nearest any striker was to a blackleg was over 150 yards - try to throw a brick that far. No one was intimidated. They were asked to support us. If they declined they were let through or walked through our picket line.

'The time the blacklegs started work, 8 o'clock, we usually had no more than six pickets, sometimes only two or three. How could six men commit a violent act against 20 or 30 men? We could not go onto the site as this is trespass and the police would have stopped us - so they said. So how could we injure or chase men, slash car tyres, break windows and set fire to site offices?'

A point made strongly by Robin Burrows is that the local press did not at the time report any of this alleged violence. Peter Bailey, the reporter who covered the building strike in Corby for the Corby Leader and visited the Henry Boot site said: 'I didn't see any violence. If it had happened we'd have found out about it - we had very good contacts with the police. I am pretty sure it didn't happen.'

Chocolate

Race Today, which used to be the monthly magazine of the Institute of Race Relations - and which nearly got suppressed a year ago (see INSIDE STORY 3) - is now published by Towards Racial Justice. This new organisation is financed by a £20,000 grant from one of the Cadbury Trusts - as predicted by Quest in their December 1972 newsletter.

Other groups which have had their grants withdrawn by Rowntree will doubtless be encouraged by this development, while West Africans, in particular, will be glad to know that the chocolate industry as a whole has not lost its interest in 'race relations'.

Sandy Kirby, who edits Race Today, says that the money comes without strings: 'The trust was approached by someone suggesting that an element of control might be included in the grant to us. However the trust pointed out that they do not operate in this way and have agreed not to exercise control over Towards Racial Justice.

'We shall be looking around for grant-aid and will be building up the circulation of Race Today. It's now 3,500 - the highest it's been - and our aim is for at least 7,500.'

Editorially, Race Today will continue to criticise the official race relations industry. 'It's a government fig leaf, though only a few involved are conscious of this. It sidesteps the whole question of racial justice by talking about "community relations" - and doesn't look at, for example, the economic structure of society.

'At the moment the Community Relations Commission is just a branch of the civil service. Its job ought to be to campaign against the immigration laws, spend more of its budget on community relations councils and local projects.

'The recent balls-up over a survey of homeless immigrants was mainly due to lack of consultation with the black community: the CRC didn't even consult its own black staff! "Incompetence" is too charitable for the people who run the CRC: they are paternalistic. They have the colonial district officer approach.

'The Race Relations Board has smartened up in the last 18 months but the tragedy is that by November 1971 it was too late: the ebb in confidence of the black community could not be reversed by administrative improvements. A major change of the law is required.'

Anthology

Keith Paton and Tessa Forrester are trying to compile an anthology of current libertarian writings for a straight publisher. They appeal for people to send them a list of recent articles and/or pamphlets in the areas of class struggle, imperialism/racism, post-scarcity/alternative society, anti-role/subverting professions, women's liberation, information.

Please bear in mind such criteria as the importance and usefulness of items, the need for representative and comprehensive selection, genuine developments in theory, quality of writing, and original unavailability, and please give precise references and, in the case of rare items, lend your copies. (Keith Paton and Tessa Forrester, 53 Kitchener Road, Selly Park, Birmingham 29; telephone 021-472 2945.)

letters

Dear INSIDE STORY

This is just a personal letter to say that I like this issue of INSIDE STORY, in particular the article on Spies for Peace article. I'm waiting avidly for the continuing story, and I hope you have sufficient articles of such a high standard for future issues. Where do you get the research material from, are you an independant mag or, as rumour has it, an offspring from Private Eye?

Just one criticism, must the layout be so dreary? Is this deliberate policy or a result of a lack of graphics artists? I, and I presume other readers, find it really hard going to take in a solid page of prose, however interesting.

Congratulations on the standard of articles.

Cheers
MIKE SHARPLES
Roots, 6 Londsdale Terrace, Edinburgh 3

We are not an offshoot of Private Eye, Oz or any other underground paper, hence our 'dreary' layout. But one or two of us worked on Ink.

Dear Comrades

I enclose a copy of a poster which this committee has just produced. The figures on the poster are Karl Marx who actively led the struggle on behalf of Irish Fenian political prisoners in England when he lived here and organised the British working class support to mobilise in their support and James Connolly the revolutionary leader of the Republican forces that engaged the British forces in Dublin in 1916 and was subsequently executed by British firing squad. It was Connolly who said 'You can kill the revolutionary but you cannot kill the revolution' and Marx who said 'Workers of the world unite'. We have produced this poster to remind the British left that Marx is the founder of Scientific Socialism and the leader who has given inspiration to the revolutionary movement around the world.

The PAC which now alone campaigns on behalf of Irish political prisoners in English jails receives minimal support from the British left; Irishmen now in jail because of their political opinions and activities with long records of British political and trade union activity are neglected by the British left and it is left to the Southern Irish bourgeois press to publicise the work of the PAC and the position of Irish political prisoners in English jails. No British group has given one penny to the support of the work of the PAC and in support of the prisoners dependents and none have campaigned on their behalf; only small Irish groups in Britain contribute to the PAC funds from their meagre resources.

We hope that INSIDE STORY will carry the fact that the poster has been produced, that it is available from the address below at 5p to organisations excluding postage and at 10p to individuals.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely
JACQUELINE KAYE
Secretary, Prisoners Aid Committee, 318 Lillie Road, SW6

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PROP: Details from national organiser, 96 Victoria Avenue, Hull, Yorkshire. Donations to: Fr P Keeling, Catholic Chaplaincy, 44 Newland Park, Hull, Yorkshire. North London group meets 7.30pm every Wednesday at North London Polytechnic, Holloway Road, N7; South London group meets first Thursday of the month at 81 Stonhouse Street, SW4.

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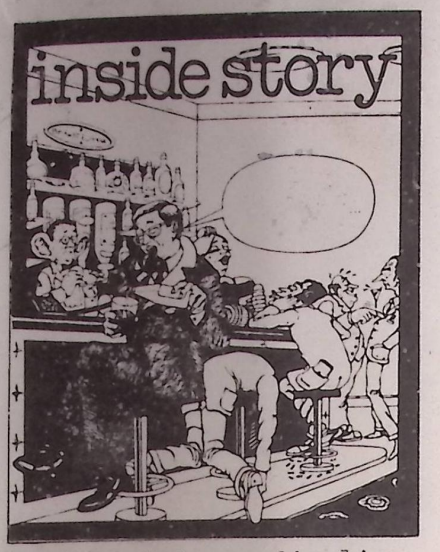

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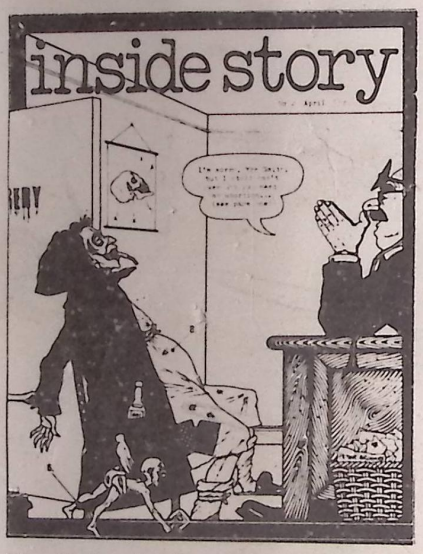

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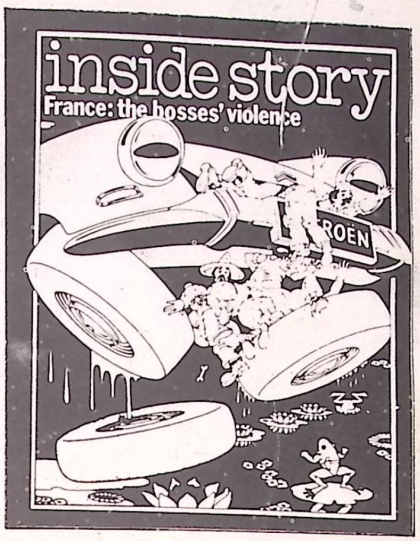

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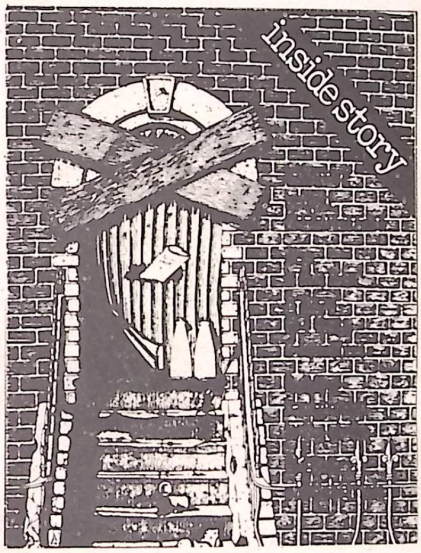

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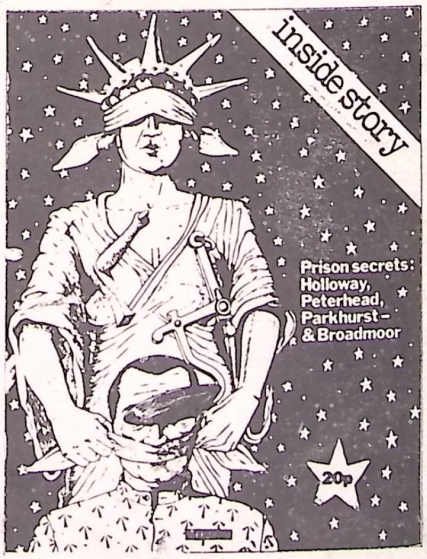

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